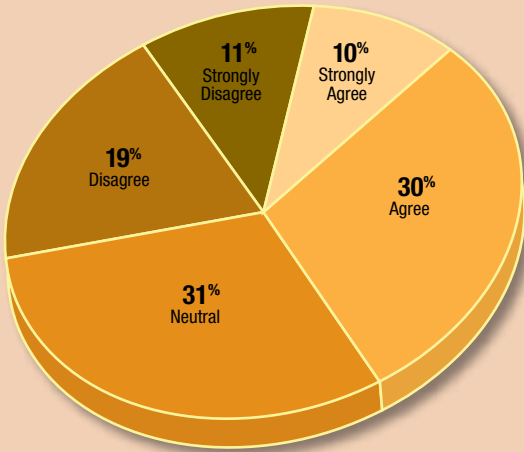
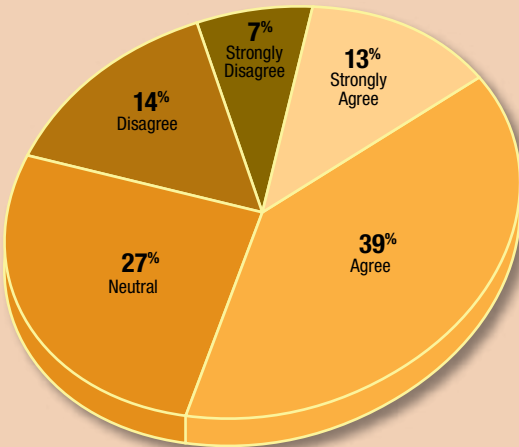


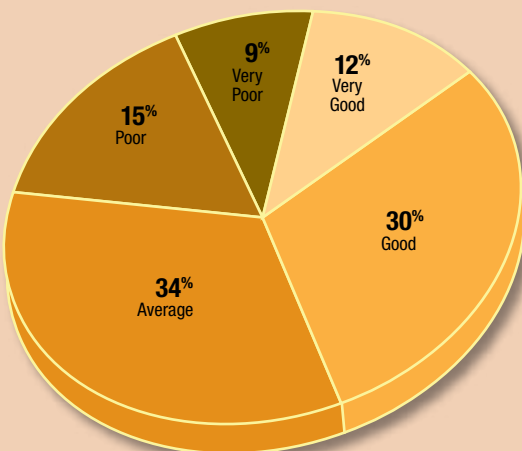
Creativity and innovation are encouraged or rewarded in my unit.



If I have an idea for a new and better ways of doing things, I have the means of proposing it for consideration.



I rate Caltrans executive management (the Director and his direct reports) on their level of open and honest communication with employees as:



Organizational Excellence Survey

Nearly 1-in-4 Caltrans employees took part in a recent Organizational Excellence survey, and their answers suggest the department is performing well when it comes to ethics, risk and communication but needs to improve its knowledge transfer policies, strategies and processes in the work unit.

Organizational Excellence is one of five main goals in the Caltrans 2015-2020 Strategic Management Plan released in March.

The Positivity Index

Survey data was analyzed to identify employee perceptions for a variety of the department's workforce issues. Ethics questions, for example, included knowledge of the department's Ethics policy (85 percent) and help line (81 percent), as well as a means for reporting ethics-related issues (71 percent). The department also received high-marks for its regular communication on Caltrans' issues and updates (62 percent). Survey statements regarding risk, as communicated in the work units, were 58 percent positive, with perceptions of risk being acted upon (managed) within work units at 50 percent (for more on what risk means in this context, see sidebar on page 33).

Issues that fell within the mid-level of satisfaction included positive perceptions of management, both executive (42 percent) and management in the work units (46 percent). The perception for adequate job training was 43 percent positive. Innovation experienced a gap between having the means of proposing a new idea for consideration (52 percent) and whether or not staff were encouraged or rewarded to be creative and innovative in their work units (40 percent).

At the bottom of the positivity index were issues such as the benefit of career development and leadership courses helping to advance careers within the department (25 percent); knowledge transfer policies, strategies and processes in the work unit (18 percent); and participation in policy or research committees (13 percent).

Survey Benefits

Most employees received e-mail invitations to participate, while Maintenance crews who don't have access to computers, received a hard copy in the mail. The response period ended June 30, with a total of 4,594 responses—about a fourth of the Caltrans workforce. Notably, almost 40 percent of survey responses were from the Division of Maintenance.

The survey data is being shared to provide transparency and accountability for processes and deliverables, and functions as a communication tool to enhance collaborative partnerships. Caltrans values these stakeholder partnerships—its control agencies, local and regional partners, and its employees and will use the data to track and encourage the improvement of these relationships. Equally valuable, is that information from this survey will help guide executive decision-making on workforce-related issues.

One of the challenges the team addressed was negativity to surveys and survey fatigue. A special effort was made to assure employees that this is their opportunity to be heard, to have a voice—that their responses will help guide the decision-making on workforce-related issues affecting them. The director is expected to continue to respond to employee questions and comments generated by the Organizational Excellence Survey—incorporating them into his town halls and videos.

How Risk Fits into Organizational Excellence

Caltrans is exposed to a myriad of risks that can keep it from realizing its mission. This exposure is found in all stages of the planning, design, construction, operation, and maintenance of the transportation system. Much of this risk manifests as hazards to its employees and road users, the assets it builds and maintains, and in the financial liabilities it assumes as an owner-operator of the transportation system.

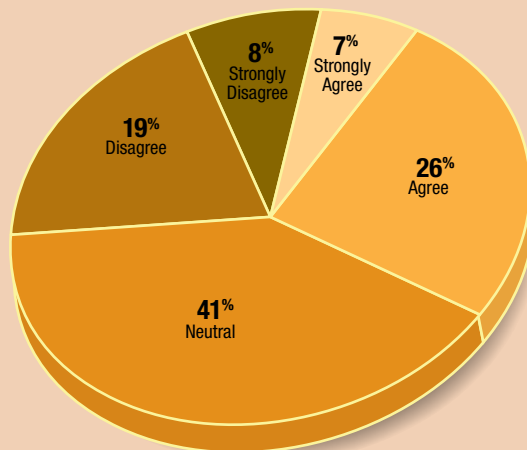
In 2012, the Caltrans Executive Board created the Office of Enterprise Risk Management with a mandate to support Caltrans achieving its objectives through the management of its risk portfolio by coordinating communication and program expertise in the context of hazard, financial, operational, and strategic risks.

Along with other risk assessment and governance activities, the risk questions of the Organizational Excellence Survey help to accomplish two objectives. One, it helps to assess risk awareness and communications at Caltrans. Two, it helps to cast a wider net for identifying the risks that Caltrans faces outside our other formal risk assessment processes. This provides insight not only into where its risks are, but also the interdependencies and correlations among them to empower the office to effectively manage the department's risk portfolio by refining, targeting, and coordinating its management activities.

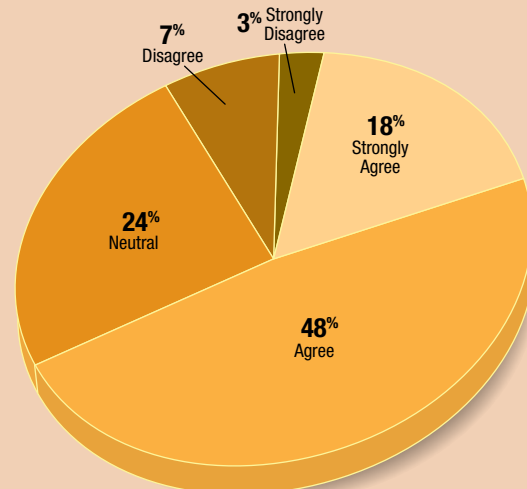
[Complete survey and data.](#)

Source: The 2015 Caltrans Employee Survey,
Administration Program
Contributor: Tammy Roberts

Overall communication, professionalism, and customer service levels have improved over the last year.



I know what the greatest risks are for my work unit to be successful.



My work unit has strategies, policies, and procedures in place (or an informal approach) that address transferring the knowledge (know-how) of management and/or seasoned staff.

